

Aspergillus niger strain in the presence of at least one inducing carbon-containing source chosen from the group consisting of:

- beetroot pulp or at least a soluble fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by acid hydrolysis;
- a cereal bran, in particular a maize bran, or a mixture of brans of various cereals, or at least a soluble fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by autoclaving said bran or said mixture.

2. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inducing carbon-containing source is present in said culture medium at a concentration of between 1 and 50 g/L, and preferably between 2.5 and 30 g/L.

3. (Amended) The process as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the *Aspergillus niger* culture comprises at least the CNCM I-1472 strain.

4. (Amended) A process for producing an enzymatic preparation with a broad spectrum of activity comprising enzymes which degrade the parietal polysaccharides and ferulate esterases, said process comprising carrying out the process as claimed in Claim 1, and recovering the culture supernatant.

5. (Amended) An enzymatic preparation produced using the process as claimed in claim 4.

6. (Amended) A process for producing free ferulic acid from a feruloylated substrate, comprising bringing said substrate into contact with at least one *Aspergillus niger* culture produced from a process comprising culturing at least one *Aspergillus niger* strain in the presence of at least one inducing carbon-containing source chosen from the group consisting of:

- beetroot pulp or at least a soluble fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by acid hydrolysis;

- a cereal bran, in particular a maize bran, or a mixture of brans of various cereals, or at least a soluble fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by autoclaving said bran or said mixture, or with at least one enzymatic preparation as claimed in claim 5, under conditions which allow the release of the ferulic acid by the enzymes present in said culture or said enzymatic preparation.

7. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the feruloylated substrate is chosen from:

- beetroot pulp or at least a soluble fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by acid hydrolysis;

- a cereal bran, in particular a maize bran, or a mixture of brans of various cereals, or at least a soluble fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by autoclaving said bran or said mixture.

8. (Amended) The process as claimed in Claim 6, wherein an amount of feruloylated substrate corresponding to 0.1 to 50 g of ferulic acid per liter of culture medium is added to the *Aspergillus niger* culture medium.

9. (Amended) The process as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the enzymatic preparation is mixed with an amount of feruloylated substrate corresponding to 0.1 to 40 g of ferulic acid per gram of total proteins of the enzymatic preparation.

10. (Amended) The process as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the *Aspergillus niger* culture or the enzymatic preparation is produced in the presence of an inducing carbon-containing source comprising beetroot pulp or at least a fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by acid hydrolysis, and wherein the feruloylated

substrate comprises at least one cereal bran or at least a fraction thereof rich in feruloylated oligosaccharides, which can be produced by autoclaving.

11. (Amended) The process as claimed in Claim 6, further comprising the bioconversion to vanillic acid, by said *Aspergillus niger* culture, of the ferulic acid released from the feruloylated substrate.

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are active in the present application. Claims 1-11 have been amended to remove multiple dependencies and for clarity. No new matter is added. An action on the merits and allowance of claims is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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